



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact:
Mike Gowrylow
(360) 570-6048

Taxable Retail Sales Decline 6.3 Percent during Fourth Quarter 2009, but Retail Trade Component Unchanged

OLYMPIA – April 7, 2010 – Overall taxable retail sales declined 6.3 percent during the fourth quarter of 2009 compared to the same period in 2008, but sales by retailers were unchanged.

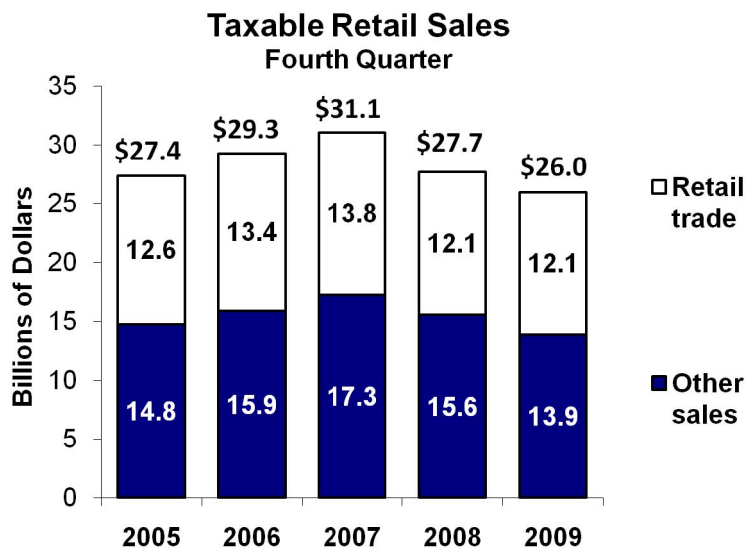
While all taxable retail sales declined to \$26.0 billion, the retail trade component was flat at \$12.1 billion, according to a report published by the Washington State Department of Revenue today.

Retail trade is a subset of all taxable retail sales that includes retailers but excludes other industries such as services and construction. Continuing weakness in construction – down 23.4 percent over last year – weighed down overall results.

Some retailing sectors experienced gains. Auto sales were up 4 percent, department stores posted a 6 percent gain, and sporting goods, toys, book and music stores climbed 6.6 percent over last year.

Other retail sectors were down. Building materials, garden equipment and supplies dropped 6.1 percent, miscellaneous retailers fell 9.9 percent, and electronics and appliances were off 5.6 percent.

While retail trade didn't decline over the fourth quarter of



2008, sales were significantly lower than the \$13.8 billion in sales recorded in 2007, \$13.4 billion in 2006 and \$12.6 billion in 2005. Overall taxable retail sales are down \$5.1 billion from a 2007 peak of \$31.1 billion and are the lowest since the \$25.0 billion recorded during the fourth quarter of 2004.

Results for the most populous counties:

	Taxable retail sales	% change	Retail trade	% change
King	\$10.1 billion	-7.5%	\$4.3 billion	0.03%
Pierce	\$2.7 billion	-6.2%	\$1.4 billion	-1.1%
Snohomish	\$2.5 billion	-3.0%	\$1.3 billion	0.6%
Spokane	\$1.8 billion	-4.8%	\$910 million	1.7%
Clark	\$1.0 billion	-7.5%	\$494 million	0.7%

Results for cities with the most sales:

	Taxable retail sales	% change	Retail trade	% change
Seattle	\$3.8 billion	-9.1%	\$1.3 billion	-0.9%
Bellevue	\$1.3 billion	-6.9%	\$656 million	7.8%
Spokane	\$969 million	-5.0%	\$496 million	-1.2%
Tacoma	\$956 million	-9.1%	\$481 million	-2.5%
Everett	\$600 million	-6.2%	\$290 million	-2.0%

Taxable retail sales and retail trade by county and city, and a breakdown of sales statewide by industry are available at

<http://dor.wa.gov/Content/AboutUs/newsroom/html/trs-q42009.aspx>.

The Department's *Quarterly Business Review*, which include breakdowns of sales by industry sector by county and selected cities, is available at

<http://www.dor.wa.gov/Content/AboutUs/StatisticsAndReports/2009/qbr409/Default.aspx>.

###

To inquire about the availability of this document in an alternate format for the visually impaired, please call (360) 705-6715. Teletype (TTY) users please call 1-800-451-7985.